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ABSTRACT

Conventional English education and language arts departments on the college level have failed to answer the need for elementary and secondary teachers competent in both educational methods and linguistic theory. An interdisciplinary "educational linguist" could bridge the schism between areas, avoid duplication of services, serve as a more effective social change agent, and devleop training programs on the undergraduate and graduate levels. Joint efforts between English, linguistics, and education departments should produce a "core curriculum" on the undergraduate level encompassing theoretical linguistics, educational theory, and practical teaching experience. Similarly, advanced coursework and graduate programs which consolidate research skills and more specialized formal study should be augmented by a teaching internship period, and research strategies should be developed to answer basic questions concerning the structure and effectiveness of language instruction programs. (KS)

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Educational Linguistics

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> There has been considerable discussion of the usefulness of the field of linguistics to education. But there has been little if anything in the literature about what education might do for linguistics.[1]

The steady decline of both writing and reading scores of elementary, secondary and college students nationwide has become a fact of American life. Educators, parents and the general public have reacted to this downward trend in various ways. There are those who provide a seemingly disinterested, "ho-hum, so what else is new" response; others become incredulous calling for a back to basics" curriculum; and some radicals profess that the schools are too verbal anyway, i.e., an overemphasis on reading and writing skills are things of the past.

Certainly, many social and cultural factors contribute to current problems in literacy, but many educational factors are responsible as well. For example, if one looks at the area of grammar instruction in the schools, there is much controversy about what grammar(s) to teach, why teach grammar at all, when should formal grammar be introduced, etc. Ultimately, issues involving the rationale, content and methods of grammar instruction in particular and language instruction in general all get back to the "who" question, the question of teacher preparation. In the past fifteen years, a great deal has been written about the "grossly inadequate" preparation of language arts and English teachers in the area of language study. Moreover, during this period many attempts have been made to provide adequate linguistic training on both the preservice and inservice levels. Yet, many of these well-intentioned efforts have failed to produce consistently desirable outcomes. Linguists such as J.L. Dillard have been highly critical of programs and procedures which provide "a psuedo kind of linguistic training". Roger Shuy has criticized summer institutes and workshops on linguistics geared to compensatory education rather than building for the

future. Obviously, the "hit and run" inservice approach is problematic, given insufficient preservice training. Ideally, inservice training in linguistics should supplement prior training rather than compensate for a lack of such training.

On the surface, it would appear that the preparation problem could be remedied if future teachers were provided with adequate training in linguistics. Various federally funded projects, curriculum revision committees, and state boards of education have developed guidelines for competency based curricula for teacher training in language study. Yet, even this approach has proved to be problematic. It is one thing for a state board of education to require a set of competencies in language training for teachers; it is quite another for colleges and universities to successfully implement these requirements in their teacher training programs. The major problem in implementation centers around the lack of adequate language course offerings in traditional English education curricula as well as the lack of adequate staff to develop and teach these courses. However, a variety of solutions are being developed.

Some universities have attempted to alleviate this problem by training language specialists in graduate English programs. Yet, this approach is problematic because language specialist/linguist appear to be synonymous. In the past, English departments have solved staffing problems by hiring a linguist to teach courses designed for high school English teachers. Usually, these courses are theoretical in nature and/or somehow "watered down" to become relevant for "education majors." While the linguist (language specialist) knows a good deal about language, he/she may not know very much about education.

Part of the problem inherent in such an approach is based on the assumption that professors of English who specialize in language study will automatically be

able to move from theoretical into applied linguistics because of their expertise in secondary English education. Yet, can one assume that faculty members in English departments know any more about secondary education than faculty members in departments of linguistics, or, for that matter, departments of physics, astronomy, plant pathology, etc.? Professors of English have traditionally been responsible for imparting the content of their discipline to future high school teachers. However, teacher training per se does not represent the consistent focus of English departments, particularly in terms of the major interests and concerns of faculty members in English departments across the country. Because of this teacher training in English has come to be viewed as the joint responsibility of both education and English departments. In 1965, a permanent Conference on English Education (CEE) was established as an organization within the National Council of Teachers of English. Thus, English education was established as a hybrid discipline with an identity of its own. Undoubtedly, the recognition of English education as an interdisciplinary field will do much to foster cooperation between members of education and English departments in their efforts to train elementary and secondary language arts and English teachers.

Since the disciplines of both English and education encompass a vast amount of theoretical and applied knowledge, it would seem that the field of English education must structure and organize the content of both disciplines into a meaningful framework. This can be accomplished by developing specific sub-disciplines within the broad field of English education. The discipline of English traditionally has been divided into three areas, literature, language, and composition. Moreover, there are further sub-specialties within any one of the three areas. For example, a language specialist could focus on any number of areas within the broad field of English language study, such as grammar,

semantics, lexicography, dialectology, child language development, sociolinguistics, historical linguistics, etc. It is virtually impossible for the English educator to be an expert in the theoretical and applied aspects of the three major areas plus the numerous sub-specialities within each area.

In addition to divisions within the field of English, there are also divisions within the field of education based on traditional chronological age grouping. The major divisions include early childhood, elementary, and secondary education. Each of these can be further subdivided according to age levels. For example, the "pre-school" and "kindergarten" programs fall within the domain of early childhood education, while the "primary," "middle," and "upper" level programs fall within elementary education. Moreover, there are specific content areas within any of these major divisions which contribute to the "substance" of a particular area.

Given the tripod nature of English as a discipline, chronological age groupings within education, and the numerous sub-specialities within both disciplines, just where does the English educator fit in? In general, the English educator concentrates on theoretical and applied aspects of literature, language, and composition on the high school level. However, there appears to be an imbalance in this situation which tends to detract from the interdisciplinary nature of the field. Certainly, the English educator has much to offer pre-school and elementary teachers in terms of his or her expertise in the processes of oral and written communication. However, if teaching demands within any given department limit the English educator to working within secondary education, he or she may not have the opportunity to develop and offer courses for future primary and elementary teachers.

Moreover, it is totally unrealistic for the English educator to be equally well versed in the content and educational methodology of literature, language, and composition. While no one expects a professor of English to be

"an expert" in all three areas, it is expected of the English educator. The English educator must bridge the gap between content and teaching methods in literature, language, and composition. In addition, he or she must develop an expertise in the discipline of education, particularly theory and practice in secondary education. Finally, the English educator must train graduate students as well.

It would appear then that English educators spread themselves too thin in one direction, i.e., the discipline of English; while their focus with respect to teacher training may be too narrow, i.e., training high school English teachers. Since the interdisciplinary field of English education would be the logical candidate for supplying the needed work in both theoretical and applied linguistics in teacher training, it may be necessary for the discipline to develop a variety of sub-specialties within the general framework of English education. In the area of language training, for example, the author proposes the development of a sub-specialty labeled "educational linguistics." Similar hybrid disciplines have been established in the past to meet felt needs within the discipline of education. For example, the fields of "educational philosophy" and "educational psychology" immediately come to mind. The remaining portion of this paper will be devoted to considering the ramifications of the author's proposal as a pragmatic solution to the pressing problems of providing adequate linguistic training for elementary language arts and secondary English teachers.

There are several valid reasons for establishing this particular specialty within the broad area of English education. The first involves the rather curious relationship which has evolved between the disciplines of education and linguistics. This relationship can be compared to one between a domineering parent and a compliant child. A pattern has developed over the years wherein the linguists lead and the educators follow. Moreover, linguists who know very little about elementary and secondary education chide educators and teachers for their lack

of knowledge about linguistics. There has always been a certain amount of smugness within academia on the parts of individuals in the "pure," "research" disciplines toward those in the "practical," "applied" areas. While linguists have condemned reading, language arts, and English teachers for their lack of linguistic sophistication, few of them have become actively involved in providing the necessary skills and training needed by those teachers whom they condemn. Shuy has emphasized this point.

> The solution to the growing surplus of theoretical linguists, for example, was for many years, to develop more and more graduate programs in linguistics that would employ more and more theoretical linguists to teach more and more students to train more and more linguists in an onward and upward, unending spiral leading who knows where.[2]

Moreover, he maintains that the surplus of theoretical linguists provides both linguists and educators with a unique opportunity to solve contemporary social and educational problems and to come to a rapprochement which is long overdue. Obviously, the "educational linguist" would epitomize the spirit of such a rapprochement.

A second and related rationale for establishing the specialty of "educational linguistics" involves the current status of training programs for language arts and English teachers. Research conducted in the past fifteen years indicates that not only are teachers poorly prepared in English language study but their training in the language problems of minority youth is almost nonexistent. Certainly, an "educational linguist" would be instrumental in helping both language arts specialists and English educators revamp traditional curricula within education departments.

A final justification involves program scheduling and the unecessary duplication of effort. In the traditional education curriculum, the "elementary" program is usually separated from the "secondary" program. Consequently, future language arts and English teachers do not necessarily take the same courses. Thus, an English education major may be required to take a course or

two in linguistics offered in the English department. Such courses, however, may not be required for language arts teachers. Language arts teachers usually receive their language training as part of the "core" curriculum within the elementary division of a given education department. Conversely, few secondary English education majors are required to take course offerings in the area of language arts. However, it would appear that the content of the "core" curriculum in linguistics should essentially be the same for both language arts and English teachers. This includes the major divisions within linguistics, such as phonology, grammar, semantics, lexicography, and dialectology, as well as interdisciplinary areas such as psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. It seems wasteful to develop separate programs in the content of linguistics for language arts and English teachers. However, this senseless separation between language arts and English education has existed in the past and persists to the present.

Individuals trained in both education and linguistics would be qualified to develop teacher training programs which combine theory, application and practice. Such programs would alleviate the problems inherent in fragmenting the language curriculum and solve the problem of providing for qualified personnel to develop and implement language training.

The dimensions of this specialty would be rather broad since it would encompass two well established disciplines, education and linguistics. However, since the primary reason for establishing the specialty centers around the need to provide adequate training in linguistics for undergraduate education majors, the initial focus of "educational linguistics" would be concerned with developing and implementing "core" curricula in education departments. Once this was accomplished, the "educational linguist" could move into the development of specialized courses for undergraduate as well as graduate students.

Ideally, graduate training programs for the "educational linguist" could be developed as a joint effort between English and education departments and/or a three way effort between English, linguistic and education departments. Finally, the specialty would focus on a variety of research endeavors of an applied nature. The remaining portion of this paper will elaborate specifics of the above proposal.

Undergraduate teacher training in linguistics

While it is difficult to specify the "ideal" program and/or programs for both language arts and English teachers in the area of linguistics, such a program should include a combination of theory, application and practice. Therefore, a "core" curriculum is conceived as a three- or four-course sequence, beginning with linguistic theory, moving into application, and culminating in practical classroom experiences. In developing this curriculum, the "educational linguist" could focus on a question posed by Michael Grady, "What are the proper uses of linguistics in the schools?" The answers which Grady provides could serve as a guide for developing the curriculum. They include:

1. To instill an understanding of the operations of the language as a study in itself
2. To improve writing performance
3. To improve reading performance
4. To improve speaking performance
5. To improve listening performance[3]

The initial course in theoretical linguistics would focus on various subject matters within the field of linguistics. A representative listing of these areas which include: dialect study and sociolinguistics, grammar, descriptive linguistics, language history, usage, lexicography, semantics, and psycholinguistics. This listing would be updated as new fields of linguistic inquiry are established. The initial work in theory would be followed by one or perhaps two courses which deal with specific educational applications of the

subject matters listed above. A portion of this study would be devoted to investigating specific textbooks, textbook series, and other curriculum materials developed specifically for elementary and high school students. In addition, the basic questions relevant to applied linguistics would be considered. For example, in the area of grammar instruction it would be important to ask "why" is grammar taught, "which" grammar(s) should be taught, "what" is the difference between analytical and pedagogical grammar, etc. In the area of sociolinguistics, students would consider how their attitudes toward language might affect their instructional methods, procedures, and their feelings toward students who speak "nonstandard" dialects, etc. Finally, if time permits, students would be asked to specifically develop curriculum materials in one or two of the subject areas within the discipline of linguistics.

The final course in the sequence would involve practical classroom experiences, which would include observation and a limited amount of supervised teaching. Ideally, students should observe a variety of classroom settings across age levels from elementary through senior high school. They should have the opportunity to observe reading instruction, language arts instruction, and instruction in specialized language areas within the high school English curriculum. Students would meet periodically with their instructor to discuss, critique, and evaluate current classroom strategies in language instruction. Following this observation period, the students would be placed in a classroom setting for about a month to develop and try out a "language unit" relevant to the subject matter which is covered in that particular class. During this period, students would meet with their instructor to evaluate their "mini-teaching" experiences in light of their newly acquired expertise in theoretical and applied linguistics.

Advanced courses in "educational linguistics" for undergraduates and graduate students

The area is wide open since advanced courses in almost any aspect of applied linguistics and/or practical classroom training could be developed. Since it would be pointless for the writer to list all of the possibilities for course development in this area, the reader is referred to two current programs which provide a model for institutions wishing to develop dialect programs or to modify existing programs. They include the Urban and Overseas English Program of the University of Indiana, under the direction of Dr. Maurice Imhoof; and the English Sociolinguistics Program of the State University of New York, College at Cortland, directed by Dr. Rudolpho Jacobson.[4]

Given that it would be impossible for one "educational linguist" to develop the wide range of course possibilities in the applied area, it would be necessary for faculty members within an education department to assess their needs for advanced courses on the basis of resources within the college or university, student demand for particular courses, and particular innovations that the faculty members are willing to experiment with. If undergraduate students are exposed to the "core" curriculum, there should be a demand for advanced courses in applied linguistics.

Graduate programs to train "educational linguists"

Since the author was trained as an "educational linguist" (though the label was never used to describe her), she will use her subjective experience as a potential model for developing graduate training programs in this specialty. The specifics of the initial phases of the graduate training program would be determined, to some extent, by the student's undergraduate major. If that major were linguistics, for example, the neophyte graduate student would spend time

studying various aspects of education during the initial phase of the program. If the major were education, the initial portion of the program would deal with fundamental training in theoretical linguistics. Similar adjustments would have to be made for undergraduate English majors, depending upon their background and training in both education and linguistics. For illustrative purposes here, the "linguistics undergraduate major" can be used as a starting point.

Although the training of the "educational linguist" is conceived to be the primary responsibility of the education department, specifically within the domain of the English education division, the training should be interdisciplinary in nature. That is, prospective "educational linguists" would receive specialized language training in various departments within the university, such as English, psychology, sociology, anthropology, speech, philosophy, and linguistics. In the course of this training, a combination of pure and practical linguistics would be used as a reference point for both course work and independent research.

In order to illustrate the dimensions of this interdisciplinary curriculum, the following table is provided (see Table I). It lists representative courses which could be included in a given curriculum. Since the list is fairly long, the prospective "educational linguist" would need to work out a program with his/her graduate advisor suitable to his/her academic and research needs, professional interests, etc. Presumably, a curriculum committee could be established with a representative from each of the departments mentioned above to develop a "basic" or "core" curriculum for the "educational linguist." The former procedure was used by faculty members in two separate universities to develop a suitable program for the author, since a "core" curriculum did not exist.

While the table provided represents any number of possibilities for developing the graduate curriculum, it should be noted that graduate training consists of a great deal more than course work. Therefore, it would be important for the

graduate student to engage in activities which will enhance his/her professional competence. Since "educational linguistics" is concerned with the development and implementation of "model" teacher training programs in linguistics, the student should have the opportunity to observe current instructional practices in reading, language arts, and English; teach classes on both the elementary and secondary levels; and supervise undergraduate student teachers in language arts and English instruction. This practical portion of the training program can be developed into a year-long internship, similar to the "clinical" internship in medicine or psychology. In addition, the graduate student should develop research skills which will allow him/her to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher training programs and curriculum innovations in linguistics.

Research in "educational linguistics"

It would be particularly important for graduate students to develop competent research skills because the field of "educational linguistics" must develop mechanisms to generate advances in knowledge. There have been significant flaws and gaps in traditional and contemporary language instruction. For example, research has been conducted over the past seventy years which deals with the relative merits of teaching one system of grammar as opposed to another. However, the overriding concern in the majority of this research dealt with attempts to link the study of grammar with the improvement of writing. Investigators were unable to demonstrate significant correlations between instruction in grammar and improvement in writing. Yet, this research has persisted into the 1970's for a variety of reasons. Few investigators attempted to analyze basic questions concerning the goals and objectives of grammar instruction. Moreover, many of them simply ignored previous research findings in the area. Consequently, a great deal of effort was wasted in attempting to link competence with performance. It should be noted that John C. Mellon's recent

investigation on transformational sentence-combining represents a significant attempt to deal with the "why" issues, review past research, and develop a research model based on theoretical principles of transformational-generative theory. This type of research represents a potential research model for "educational linguistics."

The sub-discipline of "educational linguistics" should develop research strategies and procedures designed to deal with the basic questions which are inherent in the area of language instruction. In the area of teacher training, for example, it would be important to assess the dynamics and variables involved in developing "model" programs, implementing these programs over a long-term period, and evaluating the effectiveness of these programs in terms of student performance. How many courses and experiences in theoretical and applied linguistics are needed to provide for adequate training? What combinations of courses, research, and practical experiences represent the most effective way to structure a training program? What instructional strategies in applied linguistics work best? What curriculum materials in applied linguistics are most effective with students of different ability levels? How can school districts expand the uses of linguistics? By dealing with basic questions of this nature, research in "educational linguistics" could provide structure and focus in an area of almost total confusion.

Footnotes

1. Roger Shuy, "Sociolinguistic Strategies for Studying Urban Speech," in Maurice L. Imhoof (ed.), Viewpoints, Bulletin of the School of Education Indiana University (Bloomington, Indiana, 1971), p. 6.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Michael Grady, "The Uses of Linguistics in the Schools," English Journal, 57 (1968), p. 879.

4. For a description of course offerings in both programs see Karen M. Hess, "Dialects & Dialect Learning: Where We're At," English Education, 5 (1973), pp. 33-34.

Table 1

Possible Courses Offered in "Educational Linguistics"

English

The History of the English Language
Advanced Composition
Modern English Grammar

Psychology

Learning Theory
The Psychology of Language
Cognition and Higher Mental Processes
Developmental Psychology
Psycholinguistics

Sociology

Sociology of Education
The Socialization Process
Social Stratification
Sociology of Language
Sociolinguistics

Anthropology

Anthropological Linguistics
Personality and Culture
Language and Culture

Speech

The Physiology of Speech
Oral Communication
Dramatics

Philosophy

Philosophy of Language
Semantics
Logics

Education

Psychological Principles of Education
Teaching the Language Arts
Teaching Reading in the Elementary School
Teaching Reading in the Secondary School
Methods courses in English education, i.e., the teaching of literature, language, and composition in the secondary school
Early Childhood Education
Child Language Development
Courses in statistics, assessment, and educational research
Educational Philosophy
Statistics
Advanced seminars in independent research, classroom supervision, and supervised instruction

Linguistics

Historical Linguistics
Comparative Linguistics
Descriptive Linguistics
Phonology and Phonemics
Morphology and Syntax
Dialectology
Lexicography
Advanced seminars on specific topics
Independent Research